1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11.	Punjab	2.71	2.84	3.33	2.17	3.35	2.15
12.	Rajasthan	30.17	35.30	32.16	32.96	34.30	38.76
13.	Tamil Nadu	16.35	15.15	18.00	18.80	18.70	17.75
14.	Uttar Pradesh	15.64	15.39	16.15	10.06	17.00	13.04
15.	West Bengal	4.68	4.30	4.70	3.88	4.80	4.66
16.	Others	1.90	1.05	0.80	1.09	0.90	0.95
	ALL-INDIA	230.00	243.85	255.00	220.15	270.00	252.99

Fire in ONGC gas well at Bombay High

*351. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major fire broke out on 12.3.99 at an ONGC's gas well on Bombay High;

(b) if so, the estimated losses suffered as a result thereof and whether the services of experts, particularly from abroad were sought to meet the situation;

(c) if so, the details thereof and total expenditure incurred on such foreign services; and

(d) the exact cause of the fire in ONGC's well on Bombay High and the steps taken to check such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLUEM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The losses could be quantified only after the fire is extinguished. The services of international experts viz., M/s. Cudd Pressure Control, Inc., USA were sought to quench the fire and to control the well. The provisional expenditure incurred on engaging the foreign services upto 06.04.99 is approximately Rs. 2,63,88,600/-. The expenditure in quenching the fire and controlling the well including the fee of foreign experts, besides the repair loss on damage to platform and rig, etc., will be reimbursed by the Insurance Company.

(d) During the repair operations on well # B-121-B with the help of rig Sagar Ratna, heavy build-up of pressure was observed in another well # C. While action to control pressure in this well was being taken, like misbehavior was noticed in well # D accompanied by gushing of high intensity mud and uncontrolled flow of gas. The uncontrolled flow of gas from well # D caught fire on 12th March, 1999.

ONGC has constituted a high level inquiry committee headed by ex-CMD of Oil India Ltd. to ascertain the factors leading to this accident, the lapses, if any,. and the steps required to be taken to prevent recurrence of such incidents. The committee is to submit the report by 15th April, 1999.

Transfer of Government Officials

*352. SHRIMATI JAYAPARDA NAHATA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have laid down any time limit for its officials to remain posted at one place in the Ministries/Departments etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof:

(c) whether it is a fact that those orders are not being followed in letter and spirit;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to ensure timely rotation of employees to check any nexus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) to (e) Department of Personnel and Training has not issued any general guidelines laying down any specific time limit for the Central Government officers to remain posted at one place in the Ministry/Department etc. Different Departments of the Government have formulated their Department specific schemes which lay down the post tenure and station tenure of various civil service posts keeping in view the availability of man-power, functional needs, financial constraints and sensitivity of posts. It is left to the individual Departments to enforce these orders and grant extension of station/post tenure in public interest or on compassionate grounds. Further, the Recruitment Rules of some posts which are notified by the President in consultation with the Union Public Service Commission or by the individual Departments also prescribe the post tenure of each post. The Central Staffing Scheme also prescribes the tenure and the cooling off for various posts of and above the level of Under Secretary. In the case of selection made by the UPSC on transfer on deputation basis, further extension is granted by the concerned Departments in consultation with the Union Public Service Commission.

Development on Inter State River Basins

*353. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's draft water policy favours legal measures for development of inter State river basins as reported in the Hindustan Times dated the 22nd March, 1999;

(b) whether it is a fact that country's total annual requirement of fresh water from various sectors is likely to be 1,050 billion cubic meters by 2025 A.D. as against the current demand of 600 billion cubic meters; and

(c) if so, what remedial steps Government propose to take/include in its "National Water Policy" so as to meet India's demand for fresh water in the new millennium?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Realising the importance and scarcity attached to the fresh water, the draft National Water Policy emphasises that the fresh water has to be treated as an essential environment for sustaining all life forms. To achieve this objective, the draft policy includes practicing non-conventional methods for utilisation of water such as through inter-basin transfers, artificial recharge of ground water, desalination of brackish or sea water and rain water harvesting; reforms in institutional mechanism, participatory approach to water resources management, private sector participation, maintaining water quality, performance improvement, financial and physical sustainability and Guidelines for water allocation amongst the States.

Criteria for Estimating Incidence of Poverty

*354. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to determine a new criteria for estimating the incidence of poverty for allocation of funds under the major Centrally-sponsored rural poverty alleviation programmes namely the JRY, Million Wells Scheme etc; and